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A
S E R M O N
Preach'd before the Right Honourable the
L O R D - M A Y O R ,
T H E
A L D E R M E N , S H E R I F F S ,
A N D
Governors of the Several Hospitals of
the City of **L O N D O N ,**
In St. **B R I D G E T**'s Church,
On *Monday* in *Easter Week*, *April 25. 1709.*

By the Right Reverend Father in God,
WILLIAM Lord Bishop of **C H E S T E R .**

Dawes
DUNCOMBE Mayor.

*Martis iij die Maij 1709. Annoq; R. Regine
Magne Britannia, &c. Octavo.*

THis Court doth desire the Right Reverend Father in
God the Lord Bishop of *Chester* to Print his Sermon
Preach'd at the Parish Church of St. *Bridget* on *Monday* in
Easter Week last, before the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and
Governors of the Several Hospitals of this City.

G I B S O N .

L O N D O N :
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Luke XIV. Ver. 12, 13, 14.

Then said he also to him that bad him, When thou makest a Dinner or a Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy Rich Neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a Recompence be made thee.

But when thou makest a Feast, call the poor, the maim'd, the lame, the blind.

And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee: for thou shalt be recompenc'd at the Resurrection of the Just.

THese were the Words of our Saviour to one of the chief Pharisees, into whose House he had enter'd, as the Context tells us, V. 1. in order to eat bread, or make a Meal, with him. And, finding there a great many Guests of the Richer Sort invited, and probably the Pharisee himself not a little pleas'd and proud to see so much, as he thought, good Company about him, he takes occasion from hence, in the Words of my Text, both to bumble the Pharisee, as to his high Thoughts of his then present Felicity, and to put him into a way of making himself much happier, for the time to come. *When thou makest a Dinner or a Supper*, saith he, when thou shalt hereafter be dispos'd to do any Act of Liberality or Generosity, do not, as thou hast now done, call thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy Rich Neighbours, do not principally make these the Objects of thy Bounty; lest the utmost which thou gainest, by so doing, be, that these bid thee again, be bountiful to thee in like manner as thou hast been to them, and so a Recompence be made thee, thou have all thy Reward in this present Life. But rather, when thou art thus bountifully dispos'd, call the poor, the maim'd, the lame, the blind:

blind: Make choice of these for the chief Objects of thy Bounty. And then *thou shalt be blessed*, thou shalt be truly and greatly happy; for *these cannot recompence thee*, thou art not likely to have thy Reward from these, in this Life: But *thou shalt be recompenc'd*, thou shalt be sure of a much better Reward, in the Life to come, at the Resurrection of the *Just*, at the great Day of Recompence, when those who have done any, even the very least, Offices of Charity to their poor Brethren, shall in no wise lose (Mat. 10. 42.) that is, shall infallibly have, *their Reward*.

The Words, thus explain'd, offer Three Things to our Consideration, very agreeable both to the Time and Occasion of our present Meeting. As

First, That Charity to the Poor is to be preferr'd, before Hospitality to the Rich.

Secondly, That our chief Motive, to be Charitable to our poor Brethren, should not be the Prospect or Hope of any worldly Advantage, but of the Rewards of another Life.

Lastly, That, at the general Resurrection, all those, who have been thus Charitable, chiefly with Regard to the Rewards of another Life, shall receive a full and ample Reward.

First, That Charity to the Poor is to be preferr'd, before Hospitality to the Rich. For, tho' I do not suppose, for Reasons which I shall mention by and by, that our Lord design'd, by the words of my Text, wholly to condemn this Sort of Hospitality, as the Words themselves, at first Sight, seem to do; yet I think nothing can be plainer, than that he did design, by them, to give Charity an undoubted Preference to it. Nay, this is the very mildest and most favourable Sense, which we can put upon such Passages of Scripture as this, where one thing is, in the Letter, forbidden, and another thing commanded in opposition to it, to make them only signify the Preference of the thing commanded to the thing forbidden. And this way of

explaining Scripture is very often necessary, as every body knows, from that famous Text, so commonly quoted upon this Occasion, (a) *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*, that is, Mercy rather than Sacrifice, and the like.

And that this Preference of *Charity* to *Hospitality* is justly due to it, methinks the *Reason* of the thing it self plainly enough speaks to us. For whether is more *reasonable*, out of our worldly Goods, to relieve and assist one that is in want, and unable to help himself, or to add to the Store of one, who is so far from wanting, that he has plenty of these worldly Goods at his own Command? Which of these Uses do we, in our Consciences believe, God first design'd the Abundance, which he has trusted us with, for? Which of these should we judge fittest to be done, if we were really in want our selves? Which of these, think we, would our natural Affection first prompt us to? Which will best answer the Ends, preserve the Peace, and promote and continue the Well-being of Human Society? Is it not much more necessary, for these Ends, to have the natural Wants of all supply'd, and so all made tolerably easy, than to have some only have Superfluity added to Superfluity, whilst others are suffer'd to labour under, that most grievous and provoking of all Wants, the

- Want of common Necessaries?

And accordingly, which of these stands *first*, in the Order of God's Commands? Doth not the Scripture constantly enjoin us, *after* having made a competent Provision, for the Subsistence of our *selves* and our *Families*, out of those worldly Goods which God has been pleas'd to bless us with, to make it our *next* and *immediate* Care to provide, out of the Remainder of them, a Supply for the Wants and Necessities of our *poor Brethren*? Did not the *Law* oblige the *Jews*, at the very same time, (b) *when they reaped the Harvest of their*

(a) Mat 9. 13. Prov. 8. 10. Mat. 6. 19. (b) Lev. 19. 9, 10. c. 23. 22.
Land,

Land, and gather'd the Grapes of their Vineyards, for their own Use, to leave some Corn in the Corners of their Fields, (c) and the gleanings of their Harvest and of their Vineyards, for the Use of the Poor? Nay, did it not oblige them quite to forego the Harvest of their (d) Land, and the Fruits of their Vineyards and their Oliveyards, every Seventh Year, that so their Poor might have the Benefit of them? And had it not several other special Ways of providing for the Poor; as by giving them the (e) forgotten Sheaf, or the Sheaf that was left behind in the Field, thro' Forgetfulness; by obliging the (cc) Rich to pay them their Wages duly, to (f) lend them Money without Usury, not to be rigorous in exacting it again, nay quite to release it, every Seventh Year? And, after all these particular Provisions made on behalf of the Poor, did it not moreover leave a general Command upon the Rich, to (g) open their hands wide unto their brethren, to the poor, and to the needy in the Land? And doth not the Gospel every where press Charity to the Poor, as one of the first and most acceptable Duties in God's Sight? Doth it not strictly Command all Christians, to be frequent and liberal to the utmost, in giving of Alms? Doth it not require them, continually, from time to time, as God Prospers them, to let their (b) poor Brethren share in their Prosperity? Nay, and doth it not oblige them even to (i) Work and Labour hard, beyond what is necessary for the Sustenance of themselves and their Families, rather than not to have, to give to him that needeth? And doth not all this plainly shew the high value which God has for Charity to the Poor, and the Sense which we ought to have of our more than ordinary Obligations to this Duty? But where do either Law or Gospel give any Commands like these, or take any Care like this, about Hospitality to the Rich?

(c) Deut. 24. 19. (d) Exod. 23. 11. (e) Deut. 24. 19.

(a) Deut. 24. 15. (f) Exod. 22. 25, 26, 27. (g) Deut. 15. 11.

(b) 1 Cor. 16. 11. (i) Ephes. 4. 28.

'Tis true indeed, there is an *Hospitality* frequently mention'd in *Scripture*, and that too always with great *Commendation*: I mean the *Hospitality* of entertaining *Strangers*, particularly such as were in *Want* and *Distress*, and yet more especially such, as had been made *Strangers* (had been forc'd to leave their Country, their Relations, Lands, Houses and Worldly Goods) for *Righteousness sake*. But alas! This is a very different sort of *Hospitality*, from that which we have been Discouraging upon, and so has no Relation to our present Argument.

Wherefore, to return to that sort of *Hospitality* which I was before speaking of: As the *Reason* of the Thing it self, and the Commands of God in *Scripture* do plainly declare for the preference of *Charity* to this sort of *Hospitality*, so likewise do the *Laws* of our own *Land*. For, whereas they take little or no Care about *this*, unless it be to restrain the Excesses of it, they take a most strict and exact Care about *that*. Inasmuch that, as surely as we receive part of our Rents and other Worldly Incomes, for the *Subsistence* of our selves and our Families, so surely we leave part of them, in the Hands of proper Persons appointed by our Laws, for the *Subsisting* of our poor Brethren: And that every House-keeper amongst us, who has any thing above what will serve the Necessities of his own Family, tho' it may be but very little, is bound, even out of that little, without being allow'd any thing for *Hospitality*, to Minister to the Necessities of such as are poorer than himself. And doth not this manifestly speak the Sense which our *Laws* have, of the much greater need of *Charity*, than of *Hospitality*? And do not they hereby instruct us, what it is our Duty voluntarily to do of our selves, in cases, which they have either totally omitted, or but imperfectly provided for? (and many such Cases there are, and always must be) viz. first and immediately, after having set a-part such a Portion of our Worldly Goods, as is necessary for the

the Support of *our Selves* and *our Families*, to apply the *Residue*, so far at least as our *Proportion* requires, towards the raising an *Adequate* and *full Supply*, for making good the *Deficiencies* of these omitted, or but *imperfectly* provided for, Cases of our *poor Brethren*. And, when we have *done* this, and not till then, will it be *reasonable* and *lawful* for us to consider, what we may properly do, in the way which we call *Hospitality*.

I say, in the way which we call *Hospitality*, because I have already observ'd to you, that *this* is very different from *that*, which passeth under the Name of *Hospitality* in *Scripture*. However, I am far from denying, that even *this* sort of *Hospitality*, which consists, as that of the *Pharisee* in my Text did, in entertaining our *Friends*, *Brethren*, *Kinsmen* and *Rich Neighbours*, may be sometimes *lawfully* and *honestly* us'd: Provided always, that it be contented to take its place *after Charity*, and to contain it self within the bounds of *Temperance* and *Sobriety*. Nay, when I consider that it is for the *Honour* of *God*, to have Men rejoice in a moderate and *thankful* use of his good *Creatures*, and that it is for the *Ease*, *Comfort* and *Interest* of *humane Society*, to have *Relations*, *Friends* and *Neighbours*, meet often and *Converse*, with *innocent Cheerfulness*, together: That all Nations have approv'd of *sober Feasting*: That even our *Blessed Lord* himself did adorn such as these with his *Presence*: And that many excellent *Purposes* of *Civil Government* and *Religion* have been, and may be, serv'd by them; when, I say, I put all these Things together, I cannot forbear Pronouncing, that there is a great deal of *Good*, in *prudent* and *sober Hospitality*: Especially if, as *Charity* goes before it, so it doth all along *accompany*, *season* and *sanctify* it: If the *Poor* are generally, in some Sense or other, the better for it, often have a *share* in the good *Cheer* which it makes, and partake of the *Bounty* of the good *Company* which it calls together: If it be us'd as a *Mean* to

carry on *Charitable Designs*, and be made an *occasion of improving the Condition of our poor Brethren*, as well as of *cultivating our Friendships with our Rich ones*. And this *was the old Christian*, this was the *old English*, way of *Hospitality*.

I am sorry that I can only say that it *was* so; but alas! it is too too plain, to be deny'd, that it *is not* so now. That little *Hospitality*, which is now left amongst us, is so far from being contented to take its due place *after Charity*, that it will hardly allow any place for *Charity* at all: So far from *beginning, going on, and ending* with it, that, on the contrary, it very often entirely *prevents and hinders* it, from *beginning to end*. It is preposterously made an *Excuse*, by some Men, for their *not being Charitable*, even tho' it, at the same time, proves their *Ability* and their *Obligations*, so to be: And, by their way of managing it, instead of *keeping*, they quite *invert*, the Order of our Blessed Lord's Command in my Text, instead of *inviting the Poor* rather than the *Rich*, they invite the *Rich principally* to be sure, if not *only*; little considering, all the while, how terrible the Doom, how dismal the final Condition, of those shall be, in another Life, who, like the *Rich Man* in the Gospel, Luke 16. *save Sumptuously themselves every Day*, but neglect their *poor Brethren*, like *Lazarus*, ready to *Starve for want*.

But, blessed be God, the true Christian Order and Beauty of this present Day's Solemnity speaks much better Things, than these. Here *Charity* appears in such a decent Pomp, as proves it to be one of the *first and greatest* Cares of this most renown'd City. Here all those Guests, who were so earnestly recommended to us, by our Blessed Lord, in my Text, *the Poor, the Maim'd, the Lame, the Blind*, find the good Effect of their Saviour's Recommendation. Here *Charity to the Poor*, and *Hospitality to the Rich*, meet together, without *struggling for precedency*, or *invading one another's places*; for as *Hospitality* is here very willing to let *Charity* go before

before it, so is Charity no less willing, to let prudent and temperate Hospitality follow after it. And oh! That it may ever be the Glory of this great City, to have its Charities much better taken care of, than its Feastings: And that the Governors of it may be always much more Sollicitous and Industrious, to keep up, increase and improve these, than these. And this, not so much with an Eye to their own Worldly Interest or Grandeur, as to the Rewards of another Life: Which, as I am to shew,

Secondly, Ought to be our chief Motive to be Charitable to our Poor Brethren. So very much concern'd was our Lord, lest Christians should make any Worldly Consideration their chief Motive to be Charitable, that he pronounceth those Blessed in my Text, who should do their Charity in such a manner, as should leave no room for any such Consideration. *Call the Poor, the Maim'd, the Lame, the Blind,* saith he, *And thou shalt be blessed, for these cannot recompence thee.* By which Words I do not suppose that our Lord design'd, absolutely to forbid our having any regard to our Worldly Interest, in the performance of our Charity (for this would be to make the Scripture inconsistent with it self, which, in other places, plainly enough proposeth Worldly Considerations, as proper Motives to us to be Charitable) but only to forbid this comparatively: So, that we should not make this our chief Motive, but that that should always be the Rewards of another Life. *Thou shalt be blessed, for thou shalt be recompenced at the Resurrection of the Just.*

And that it is our Duty, thus chiefly, and before all Worldly Considerations, to have respect to the Rewards of another Life, as our principal Motive and Encouragement to be Charitable, is, I think, very evident, for these following Reasons.

First, Because this is most agreeable to the Natures of Things themselves.

Secondly, It is most for the Honour of God, our Blessed Saviour, and our Holy Religion.

Thirdly, It is most for our own Interest: And,

Lastly, Most for the Interest of Charity it self.

First, because this is most agreeable to the Natures of things themselves. The Rewards of another Life are, in their own nature, so much better than, so infinitely preferable to, all that we call the good things of this Life, that when we make them, rather than the things of this Life, our motive to do good, we only do them justice, only pay them that respect, give them that preeminence, which their nature deserves. Nay, the Rewards of another life are so truly the chief happiness of Man, that these ought to be his principal aim, in all his actions: especially as to Charity, or parting with some portion of his present worldly goods, for the relief of his poor Brethren, he cannot have any motive so proper, any so powerful, as this, that, by so doing, he secures to himself infinitely better goods, nay the very best which it is possible for him to enjoy.

Secondly,

Secondly, This is most for the honour of God, our Blessed Saviour, and our Holy Religion. For, besides that this is, in this very particular, an instance of our obedience to them, who have plainly commanded this; it is likewise a proof, in general, of our acting upon true Christian principles; of our (a) walking by faith, and not by sight; of our believing in (b) him that is invisible, and of our taking him for our exceeding great reward: of our putting the same value upon things, which our Religion has put, and suffering nothing to come into (bb) competition with those things, which that has assur'd us, are Infinitely above all competition: Whereas, doing good chiefly upon a Worldly principle, is the very reverse of all this. And accordingly we find, that this is the great commendation, given in Scripture, of the first Christians taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, that they did so, chiefly on this consideration, that they had (cc) a better and an enduring Substance in Heaven. And as to this very Duty of Alms-giving, God himself has assur'd us, that if we do it before men to be seen of them, chiefly out of vanity or ostentation, or any other worldly principle, he will have no manner of regard to it; it shall have all its reward in this life: but if we do it in secret, or in any such way as may testify our chief hope of being rewarded for it in another life, then God will have regard to it, and reward it accordingly. And this plainly shews,

Thirdly, That this is most for our own Interest. If we are Charitable chiefly upon a worldly principle, we see what we are to expect, only a worldly reward: but if we are Charitable upon a principle of Heavenly-mindedness, we are sure of a much better reward, an Heavenly one. Nay, we are sure of being rewarded doubly, this way, both in this life, and that which is to come: For, besides that our Saviour has promis'd us a reward at the Resurrection of the Just, he has promis'd likewise, that all these things, the good things of this World, shall be added unto us, if we thus first seek his Kingdom. So that one way we make sure of the Rewards of both Worlds, the other of the Rewards but of one, and those Infinitely the worst too.

Lastly, This is most for the Interest of Charity it self. A Principle of worldly Interest will, at best, be but a very uncertain and a very slender support, for Charity to rest upon: never lending it any more help, than just it must, and even withdrawing that, as soon as ever it can get an opportunity of doing it safely. Nay, a Principle of worldly Interest, for the very same Reasons, for which it may sometimes be for Charity, will at other times be against it: and its inclinations must ever be against Charity, because Charity is in its own nature opposite to it; as depriving it of part of those good things, in which it makes its happiness chiefly to consist. But a Principle of heavenly-mindedness will be

(a) 2 Cor. 5. 7. (b) Heb. 11. 27. Gen 15. 1.

(bb) Mark. 8. 36.

(cc) Heb. 10. 34.

a never-failing and most plentiful Spring of Charity. This will effectually wean us from an immoderate love of the things of this World, and set both our hearts and treasures wide open to Charity: this will always be on the side of Charity; and the more we grow and improve in this principle, the more will our Charity naturally grow and improve too: the more earnestly shall we pant after the things of another life, the more willing shall we be to exchange the things of this life for them.

And thus, we see, with what great reason our Lord has made the Rewards of another life our principal Motive and Encouragement to be Charitable. I say, our principal Motive; because, as I observ'd before, God has sometimes propos'd, even the Rewards that Charity is like to meet with, in this present life, as a Motive to it, of a lower degree. And I see such excellent Charities now before us, from which we may reasonably expect some Rewards even in this World, that I am loth to exclude this Motive its proper place. But then I hope, that as I am willing to give it its proper place, so you will be sure to keep it in this place, and, never let it get before, that Infinitely more glorious Motive, the Recompence at the Resurrection of the just; when, as I hasten to shew,

Lastly, All those, who have been thus Charitable, chiefly with regard to the Rewards of another life, shall receive a full and ample Reward. By the Resurrection of the just here is meant the general Resurrection, which shall be, as St. Paul tells us, (a) of the unjust, as well as of the just. But our Lord mention'd only that part of the Resurrection, which was necessary with relation to the Argument which he was upon: Otherwise, the Resurrection of the unjust would have afforded likewise a most powerful motive to stir us up to Charity, viz. that, in that (b) he shall have judgment without mercy, who hath shew'd no mercy.

And of this general Resurrection, both of the just and unjust, we have such a plain and incontestable proof in the Resurrection of our Saviour from the dead, who dy'd and rose again as the Representative of all Mankind, and are so fully assur'd in Scripture that all Mankind (bb) are risen, virtually and potentially risen, with him: that I shall not enter into any farther Proof of it, at present. Especially considering that we have all so very lately been commemorating our Blessed Lord's Resurrection, and, I hope so effectually too, as not in the least to doubt of its being an infallible pledge of our own.

But my present business shall be to represent to you the happy part, which the Charitable man shall be sure to have, in this Resurrection. And, in order to make you sensible of this, one would think it should be enough only to put you in mind: that

(a) Acts 24. 15. (b) James 2. 13. (bb) Ephes. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 15. 20.
Charity

Charity was our Lord's (c) *own Commandment*, the *peculiar badge* of his Disciples, his *own constant employment* on earth, that in *this* men most *nearly imitate him* and his *Father*, that *this* naturally tends to work us up into a *Temper meet for Heaven*: and consequently, that *this* doth both in its own nature *qualify us* to become the (d) *happy Children of the Resurrection*, and give us very particular encouragement to *hope*, that we shall be *made so* by God.

But, besides this, there are very *express Promises*, in *Scripture*, of *great and glorious Rewards* to *Charity*, at the general *Resurrection*. For let us but consider the *Description*, which our Lord himself has there given of the *day of Judgment*, and that will soon shew us, what a *particular regard* will then be had to *Charity*: how this will be enquir'd after, *more than any other Christian Grace or Virtue*: how our Judge will, in a *more especial manner*, vouchsafe to accept *this*, as an (dd) *immediate honour and service* done to himself: how he will make *this* the *chief Test* of our having been his faithful Followers and Disciples: and reward *this*, with a *beautiful Crown*, of most transcendent Brightness and Glory.

Oh Blessed Resurrection, thou *distinguishing hope* of a Christian, thou *Sum* of all his *Wishes*, and *Completion* of all his *Joy*; what encouragement can we have to be charitable, comparable to thee? How exceeding *light* and *trifling* are all other considerations, when set *against* thee? Of what *vast* and *eternal* moment art thou to us? How did the wise St. Paul (e) *count all things but loss and dung*, in comparison of this one thing, that he might, by any means, attain unto the *Resurrection of the dead*, unto an *happy part* in that *Resurrection*. How earnestly did he *press towards the mark*, (f) through all manner of *afflictions*, *necessities* and *distresses*, for the prize of the *high calling* of God, in *Christ Jesus*? And what did not the old Patriarchs most gladly do, what did they not most willingly suffer, that they might (g) *obtain a better Resurrection*? And shall the hope of this, which was so powerful a Principle in them, as to carry them cheerfully through the greatest difficulties, temptations and afflictions, not have power enough in us, to provoke us to love and to good works; to the natural, easy and pleasant duty of relieving the wants of our Brethren? Shall *this Hope*, upon which the *Primitive Christians* readily (h) sold their goods and possessions, and parted them to all men, as every man had need, not have influence enough over us, to make us ready to distribute and willing to communicate, even what we can well spare out of our abundance and superfluity, to the necessities of the Saints? God forbid. For oh! how justly will they deserve to

(c) Joh. 15. 12. Joh. 13. 34, 35. Acts. 10. 38. Luke 6. 35, 36.

(d) 1 Cor. 13. 8. (dd) Mat. 25. (e) Phil. 3. 8, 11, 14. (f) 2 Cor. 6. 4.

(g) Heb. 11. (h) Acts 2. 45.

come forth to the Resurrection of condemnation, who will not do this small thing to obtain the Resurrection of Life?

But, beloved, (i) we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, tho' we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shew'd toward his name, in that ye have ministred to the Saints, and yet do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Here a true Report was read.

Thus far I have been exhorting you to Charity in general. Give me leave now to say a few words, in behalf of those particular Charities, of which you have had an Account just now read to you. And a very few words, sure will serve, to recommend these Charities, the Blessed effects of which do of themselves speak so loudly, for them.

The first, which comes in the order of your Report, is *Christ's Hospital*. And justly is it call'd *Christ's Hospital*, since it is a Receptacle of those poor, innocent, helpless Children, who are so dear to Christ: an House of Support, Maintenance, and lasting Provision, for his little ones: a School, for the educating of them in his Faith, and to his Service and Glory, and, which he himself has graciously allow'd the next place to, to their own present and eternal welfare, and the true benefit and comfort of Mankind in general. For oh! how many are hence every year, sent out into the world, likely to become Blessings to it? How many have actually prov'd so, and by the great Advantages of that Religious and Ingenuous Education, which they here receiv'd, render'd themselves most useful and creditable Members of this Great City, nay and even rais'd themselves to the very highest Places of Trust and Honour in it? More particularly, how many are here purposely train'd up for the immediate Service of the Publick: For the Service of it in, its best and most important Part, its Navigation; that which is to be not only its chief Defence and Security, but almost its whole Trade, Wealth and Plenty? And how much of these do we all owe, to those many brave and skilful Seamen, who have been Educated in the Mathematical School of this Hospital, and sent out thence into Her Majesties Fleet so well accomplish'd, as if they were all design'd, one Day, to be Commanders in it?

(i) Heb. 6. 9, 10, 11, 12.

St. Bartholomew's and St. Thomas's Hospital. Then, As to the *Wounded, Sick and Maim'd*; these were our Lord's peculiar Care, so surely ought they to be *our's*. As he thought it one of the highest Proofs of an unmerciful Temper, to behold a Man (*k*)*naked, wounded, and half-dead*, and yet not to take Care of him, so surely ought we. And we

shall not be able to help thinking so, if we will but attend to the *Tornings* of our own *Bowels*, which *naturally* plead with us, and that very strongly too, for *all* in this *miserable* Condition; insomuch that, I believe, it could be hardly possible for any Man, who has an Heart of *Flesh*, and not of *Stone*, to pass through our Hospitals for the *Sick and Wounded*, and view the many *sad and moving* *Sights* there to be seen, and yet not put on *Bowels of Mercy and Compassion* towards them. Especially, when he should consider, how many of the *miserable* Objects, which he should there see, had been made thus *Miserable*, for *his sake*; had receiv'd all their *Wounds and Bruises*, and *broken and lost* their precious *Limbs*, in his defence: In defence of his *Liberty*, his *Property*, his *Life*, and which is still *more* than *Life* it self, his *Religion*. And Lord! what a *worthless* Wretch then must that be, who can think much to contribute, towards the healing of those *Wounds*, which have kept him in a *whole Skin*: Towards setting those *broken Bones*, and repairing, as far as he is able, the loss of those *mangled Limbs*, which have so *dearly* purchas'd his *Peace and Security*, all his *Happiness and Enjoyments*? What a *sorry Christian* must he be, who can hear his Saviour himself commanding him, to take Care of the *Maim'd, the Lame, and the blind*, and yet not immediately do his utmost, to shew his Care of them?

Bridewell Hospital.

Your famous *House of Correction* next bespeaks our Assistance; and well may it do so, since both our *Government* and our *Religion* are so much indebted to it. (1) *The Rod and Reproof*, saith the *Wise Man*, give *Wisdom*, very often are means of bringing Men to the best sort of *Wisdom*, a *Sense of Religion*: And hardly ever fail of giving them *Worldly Wisdom*, in some Degree or other: If not enough to make them *Diligent and Industrious*, for the future; and so consequently *useful and profitable* Members of the *Commonwealth*, in which they Live, yet, at least enough to make them *less hurtful and less troublesome* Members of it, by making them more *cautious* of their outward Behaviour, more *fearful* of provoking those *Laws*, which they have felt the *Smart* of. Besides, here are *kind and gentle* ways, as well as *harsh and rugged* ones, of doing Good, to them that deserve them. Here *Children* are brought up to *honest Arts and Trades*: Here *indigent and miserable* People, and such as are in great *Distress*, have Cloa-

(k) Luke 10. 31, 32. (l) Prov. 29. 15.

thing,

and such other Relief as their Necessities require: Nay, have even those, who formerly us'd to be appointed to die for their Crimes, find Preservation from Death, certain Preservation from temporal Death, and, if it be not their own Fault, from eternal Death also. And oh! what a Glory, what an Happiness, would it then be, to this Great City, if these Charities could be so enlarg'd, that, as they have already in part, so they might hereafter entirely, ease it of its Vagrants and common Beggars, its lewd and disorderly Persons, its idle and dishonest Servants, its Pilferers, Shoplifters, Thieves, Pick-pockets, &c. that is, in one word of its greatest Burthens and Reproaches?

And, Blessed be God, these excellent Charities have of late been very much enlarg'd, by the London setting up of a New, and most Useful, Work-house. Work-house! Which I choose to mention here, tho' not perfectly in its Order, because of its Relation to the Charity, which went before. A most useful Work-house, I say, because I hardly know of any thing more truly for the Service of the Publick, and more for the Benefit both of Poor and Rich, than this is. For it is a School of true Christian Instruction, and all Sorts of proper Education, for the Children of the Poor: A School of Discipline and Reformation, for the Lazy and the Slothful, the Loose and the Dissolute, the Turbulent and the Unruly: And consequently a School of Terror and Discouragement to all manner of Evil-Doers, and of Praise and Encouragement to all such as are inclin'd to do well. It is a Nursery of Honest, Skilful, and Industrious Servants and Apprentices: A Cure of Publick Nuisances and Grievances: A Preserver and Promoter of the common Peace and Happiness of Society. And accordingly we find that St. Paul himself could prescribe no better way, of curing such as were (m) disorderly in his Time, and Disturbers of the Peace of their Neighbours, than by commanding them to work with Quietness, and eat their own Bread: And commanding others, not to let them partake of their Charity, not so much as to give them to eat, if they would not work. And I make no doubt, but that, if St Paul himself were now here, he would be highly pleas'd to see you practising, what he formerly enjoin'd the Rich, Trading, Inhabitants, of the then Famous City of Thessalonica, (n) Viz. to set their Poor, Idle, and Disorderly Persons at work, and most earnestly exhort you, as I now do, in his Words, to see that ye abound in this Grace also.

There remains still one Charity to be spoken to, which, tho' I have a little post-pon'd, yet I am far from having forgotten: I mean your Hospital, for keeping Bethlem Hos- ing and curing of Lunatick and Distracted Persons: pital. And indeed, when I consider, how invaluable a Blessing a Man's Understanding is, how terrible an Affliction it is

(m) 1 Thes. 3. 10, 11, 12. (n) 2 Cor. 8. 7.

thought by us all to have a Dear Friend or very dear Relation bereav'd of this, and how ready we should be to purchase the Redem'g of this to them, at any Rate: I shall consider, not only how utterly unable to help themselves in this Condition are, but likewise in what extreme Danger of doing all manner of Harm to themselves, and even endangering their own Lives, if not well watch'd and taken care of: I can hardly forbear pronouncing their Case the most deplorable of any, and consequently the Charity of taking care of them, the greatest Charity of all which I have mention'd. But I do not love to compare Charities, especially when they are all so very good, as these now before us. I shall therefore add but a very few Words more, upon this Charity: *Viz.* That our Blessed Lord has particularly recommended it to us, by his Example (a): And that we cannot take a better way to engage God to continue to us and ours the Right Use of our Reason and Understanding, than by shewing all possible Kindness to those of, those our most unhappy Brethren, who have lost the Right Use of theirs.

To what has been said of each of these Charities singly, Give me Leave to add nothing, which may be generally said of them all: *Viz.* That they are so faithfully and prudently manag'd, by the respective Governors of them, that a private Christian, cannot intrust his Alms in better Hands than theirs; Hands which will not only safely dispense their Alms, to the Uses for which they design'd them, not only not diminish or take from them, but mightily increase and add to them, out of their own. So that indeed, to put our Alms into these Hands is to put them out to great Interest for the Benefit of the Poor: And to perform Two most excellent Christian Duties, at the same time; to be merciful our selves, and to provoke others to be so too.

And now, my Brethren, behold the lovely Band of this Day's Charities, set in its true Light: Consider it well: Think with your selves, how much it is for the Honour of God, for the Good of Mankind, and for the Credit and Praise of our Religion both as Christian and Protestant, and then tell me, whether we may not reasonably expect all manner of Blessings from God, both in our Publick and Private Capacities; if we go on to do our best, towards Supporting, Encouraging and Improving it. But above all think, what a Glorious Recompence we shall then be sure of, at the Resurrection of the Just; and let the Consideration of this, as St. Paul adviseth, (p) make us stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our Labour is not in vain in the Lord.

(a) Mat. 4. 24. c. 17. 15.

(p) 1 Cor. 15. 58.

